State-wise estimates of production of major rabi crops for 1996-97 and 1997-98 are annexed.-(See Appendix 184, Annexure No 27].

(c) The prospects of rabi crops during 1997-98 was closely monitored in the Crop Weather Watch Group meetings in the Ministry of Agriculture. Besides, vari-ous meetings were also organised with different State Governments to overcome the problems being faced due to prevailing situation during rabi 1997-98 season. Arrangements were made for supply of quality seeds, of short duration varieties, fertilisers, pesticides, credit etc. Extension machinery was geared up. The senior officers in the Ministry were allotted States for close monitoring of the situation with a view to take remedial measures. As a result, the situation improved and the loss in production curtailed.

Degradation of Agricultural land in Orissa

906. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the growing degradation of agricultural land in Orissa;

(b) if so, what are the main reasons for the growing degradation of agricultural land; and

(c) the steps taken to check the degra-dation of land?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAll): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The main reasons for the growing degradation of agricultural lands are un scientific exploitation of the land resour ces, over-grazing, shifting cultivation, de forestation and haphazard mining etc.

(c) Department of Agriculture is imple menting two Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as (i) Soil Conservation in the catchments of River Valley Projects, (ii) National Watershed Development Project in Rainfed Areas, to arrest degra-dation of agricultural lands in the State. In addition to this, the Government of Orissa also implement several programmes, namely, (i) Integrated Watershed Development Project (ii) Indo-Danish Comprehensive Watershed Development Project (iii) Plantation of miscellaneous and commercial species in wastelands. Besides the above, the State Department also takes up various Soil Conservation measures like Drainage Line Treatment, Check Dams, Stabilisation of shifting sand dunes, avenue plantation, etc., to certain Soil erosion.

Production of Cereals and Pulses in Orissa

907. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the total production of cereals and pulses in Orissa during 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98;

(b) the target set for the production of cereals and pulses in the State for the same period; and

(c) the various steps taken to increase the area under cultivation of cereals and pulses in Orissa in Ninth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) The targets and achievements in production of cereals and pulses in Orissa during 1995-96 to 1997-98, is as follows:—

(in lakh tonnes)

Crops	Year	Targets	Achieve-ments
Cereals	1995-96	72.89	63.71
	1996-97	72.60	45.36
	1997-98	69.30	64.87
Pulses	1995-96	11.30	4.31
	1996-97	11.30	2.99
	1997-98	7.00	3.84

(c) To increase the production and productivity of cereals and pulses, the

Government is implementing the Integrated Cereals and Development Programme in Rice Based Cropping System Areas and National Pulses Development Project which are to continue during the 9th Five Year Plan. The increase in area under cereals and pulses through these programmes is envisaged only through intensive use of land in various seasons.

सिंचित तथा असिंचित भूमि की उपज दर

908.**श्री बजजिन्दर सिंह**:

श्री बलवंत सिंह रामूवालिया:

क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि देश में सिंचित तथा असिंचित भूमि की उपज दर में भारी अन्तर हैं;

(ख) यदि हां,तो सिंचित तथा असिंचित भूमि की उपज दर के संबंध में सरकार का क्या अनुमान हैं; और

(ग) देश में आठवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना के अंत में कुल कृषि उत्पादन की तुलना में सिंचित और असिंचित भूमि से कितने-कितने प्रतिशत उपज के होने का अनुमान हैं?

कृषि मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री(श्री सोप पाल): (क) से (ग) जी हां,देश में सिंचित और असिंचित परिस्थितियों के अन्तर्गत,विभिन्न फसलों की उपज की दरों में अन्तर रहता है । तथापि,इस संबंध में सभी राज्यों/फसलों के बारे में सरकारी अनुमान क्रमबद्व रूप में उपलब्ध नहीं है जिससे इन अनुमानों को अखिल भारतीय स्तर पर परिणाम निकाला जा सके ।

Strike Threat by Fishermen

909. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the fishermen all over the country threatened to go on agitation including strike;

(b) if-so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to find a solution to the threatened strike?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) No intimation of agitation/strike from fishermen all over the country have been received.

(b) and (c) The question do not arise.

Suicide by Farmers

910. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the large number of suicides committed by farmers in different States;

(b) if so, the States from where such incidents have came to the notice of Government;

(c) the reasons why the farmers in those States have committed suicides; and

(d) the Steps taken to help the fanners in those States which are facing same kind of problems?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (d) The State Government of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra have reported total such suicidal deaths as 236, 29 and 51, respectively, mainly as a result of damage to crops due to natural calamities.

It is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments conerned T provide relief to the people affected by natural calamities from their annual allocation under the Calamity Relief Fund (CRF). Additional assistance, if any, is provided from the National Fund for Calamity Relief (NFCR) in the event of calamities of rare severity. An additonal assistance of Rs. 12.00 crore was released to the Government of Andhra Pradesh during 1997-98, from the NFCR in the wake of damage to crops, mainly cotton, due to pest attack. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has sanctioned ex-gratia of Rs. 1.00 lakh to the next of kin of each deceased while the Government of Karnataka has sanctioned ex-gratia of Rs. 1.00 lakhs each in 13 suicidal cases which has some relation to crop loss and the